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FROM: Helsinki

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 140, September 14, 5 p.m.

PRIORITY

SENT DEPARTMENT 140; REPEATED INFORMATION MOSCOW 27

In farewell call on President Paasikivi today in presence Foreign Minister I took occasion mention our natural interest in his forth coming visit Moscow and asked him if there was anything he could tell me on the subject or was I to rely implicitly on assurances given me by Foreign Minister last week (see EMBTEL 117, September 6) that "door was wide open" and no understandings yet existed. President replied "You have as much information today on subject as anyone in government except me and Prime Minister Kekkonen." He added "You may be sure I would not be going to Moscow unless I believed that it was in Finland's real interest for me to go. When Stalin invited me to Moscow in 1948 I told him I was too old and feeble to undertake the journey. I am now seven years older and I would certainly not be going there unless I believed that Finland would benefit from my trip." He had a twinkle in his eye and exuded confidence.

I can read in this conversation only that Paasikivi has substantial reason for belief that some arrangement will flow from moscow discussions which will be welcomed in Finland with quid pro quo, if any, of sufficiently minimal proportions as not to provoke political division in Finland over wisdom of acceptability.

AB: JK

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